

USEFUL HINTS TO BUYERS.

It is always a time to learn lessons when old established herds are dispersed, as it is then seen what the special aim of the individual breeder has been and what type he has chiefly been associated with. At a dispersion sale, purchasers who are forming new herds are well advised if they carefully note the grouping of various families in the catalogue or follow the line of breeding which has chiefly contributed in the manufacture of the best specimens in the herd, says Mr. John Hill, an English authority. It is usual for men to buy at random a few of the best-looking cattle and think by taking them home and mating them with any bull which they may happen to have, although he be himself of great merit in form and blood, they are certain of having first-class produce. The chances are that disappointment will follow, although of course some men have what is called luck, and the cross with the new purchases may "hit."

The advice that can be offered to beginners is to go carefully through the herd and mark the best animals of the different ages, and then go and look out their dams. It is often that the best breeders in a herd are overlooked; probably their maternal duties have taken away something of their natural bloom and wealth of flesh, and the value of these priceless matrons is unrecognized by the novice. The "old hands," on the contrary, are on the alert, and pick up the bargains which the best breeders usually turn out to be. It does not at all follow that the best-looking females are the best breeders—I mean from a showman's point of view. If it were so, breeding would become a certainty. "Like produces like" is the theory, but unfortunately it is not always carried out in practice. It is here that the inborn talent of the breeder comes in; he knows in some mysterious way that such and such animals are likely, when mated together, to produce what he wants, and he works out his ideas to a successful issue.

There is something in a cow which tells an experienced man that she is likely to be a good breeder. In a Hereford you would look for a nice feminine character, a mild, expressive eye, nicely turned horns, rather of an up-turning curve for choice, well

sprung ribs, good back and lengthy quarters, roomy body, and well developed udder. She may be a trifle small and what some would call mean in her general appearance, and perhaps somewhat light in the fore quarter and neck, but, if she is handled, you will find that her "touch" is perfection, that her hide will fill your hand, and that she is covered with an ample coat of hair, or with undeniable evidence of having such before the winter days require it. If such a cow as this is found in an old-established herd, and is also found to be the dam of some of the plums among the youngest animals, the wise man will keep on bidding as long as his purse will permit him. Another question there is to be considered is, Do you want to breed bulls or females? Note carefully the dams of the best bulls. Cows that can breed them are few and far between; and bulls that are sires of good bulls are scarcer still. With some such thoughts as these, the careful buyer will attend a dispersion sale.

NOT WHAT HE CAME FOR.

While a small boy was fishing one Sunday morning he accidentally lost his foothold and tumbled into the creek. As an old man on the bank was helping him out he said: "How did you come to fall in the river, my little man?"

"I didn't come to fall in the river. I came to fish," replied the boy.

—Home Journal.

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